Department Climate Workshops: "Typical" Themes

Positives – Department

- Collegial, professional, good teamwork, good conflict resolution process
- Quality scholarship, research, highly skilled people, good reputation for department
- Good supervisor
- Care for the work being done, passion for the work
- Ethical behaviors
- Social opportunities and activities
- Reasonable workload
- Welcoming, friendly
- Common goals, mission
- Respect for others
- Helpful faculty, staff, mentoring resources, grants assistance
- Diversity
- "Open doors," Open-mindedness, open discussion encouraged, information readily available
- Supportive atmosphere, positive environment
- Stability
- Professional development, career advancement opportunities
- Included in decision-making, representation on committees
- Sufficient monetary resources
- Variety, flexibility, autonomy
- Good work space, good location

Negatives – Department

- External pressures from College, Univ. administrators, Dean
- Gossip
- Negative feelings, unenthusiastic workers, low morale, feeling underappreciated
- Unethical, unprofessional behaviors, lack of accountability or responsibility, cutting corners, quality concerns
- Budget/financial issues, lack of raises
- Lack of unified vision, goals, lack of direction, self-interest
- Politics
- Inequitable allocation of resources, inequitable treatment of department members
- Lack of polite behaviors (smile, acknowledging a person)
- Harassment, discrimination, lack of respect
- Individuals who single-handedly affect the climate
- Inflexibility
- Feeling left out, isolated, lack of communication, lack of teamwork
- Hierarchy, people acting as if they are "better" than others, poor leadership structure
- Turf wars within departments
- Lack of interest in teaching

- Graduate student issues, funding
- Lack of trust
- Left out of decision-making process, lack of participation in meetings by everyone
- Poor conflict resolution process
- Short-staffed
- Inefficiency, disorganization, ineffective leadership, poor leadership style (punitive, unsupportive), poor management style
- Lack of performance evaluations
- Few opportunities for career advancement, difficult to find out about advancement opportunities
- Department not "evolving" or moving forward
- Overworked, workload too large, time constraints
- Space is too small, overcrowding

Expectations of the Chair

- Building community, fostering relationships, connect with faculty and staff
- Be a leader
- Hire competent faculty and staff
- Candid, honest
- Well-informed
- Fair, treats others equally, support for all regardless of differences, allow all to contribute to decision-making process
- Distribute power and responsibility fairly, hold people accountable
- Provide goals and directions to the department, visionary, inspiration, lead by example, advance the department, be proactive
- Lobby University, schools and colleges for money
- Be the department representative, department advocate, especially to outsiders
- Communicate clearly, listen, be open-minded, be visible, be approachable
- Foster positive climate
- Resolve conflicts
- Be organized, efficient, be a good businessperson
- Increase diversity
- Mentoring, promoting career development
- Supportive, appreciative of people's work
- Promote merit compensation, job security

One thing the Chair could do to improve climate:

- o Communicate better, listen more
- o Be present, visible, know everyone
- o Be proactive, lead by example, be positive
- o Be organized
- o Foster respectful behavior
- o Bring people together, initiate events
- o Model professional behavior
- o Recognize good work, hold people accountable
- o Get more resources
- o Delegate
- o Treat everyone equally, respect and value everyone
- o Encourage participation in committees from staff, grad students
- o Include everyone in decision-making process
- o Foster career development
- o Create an effective leadership structure
- o Address "micro-climate"—e.g., lab climate, area/discipline climate
- o Encourage collaboration
- o Communicate common goals, mission of the department
- o Represent, support all people in the department, not just faculty